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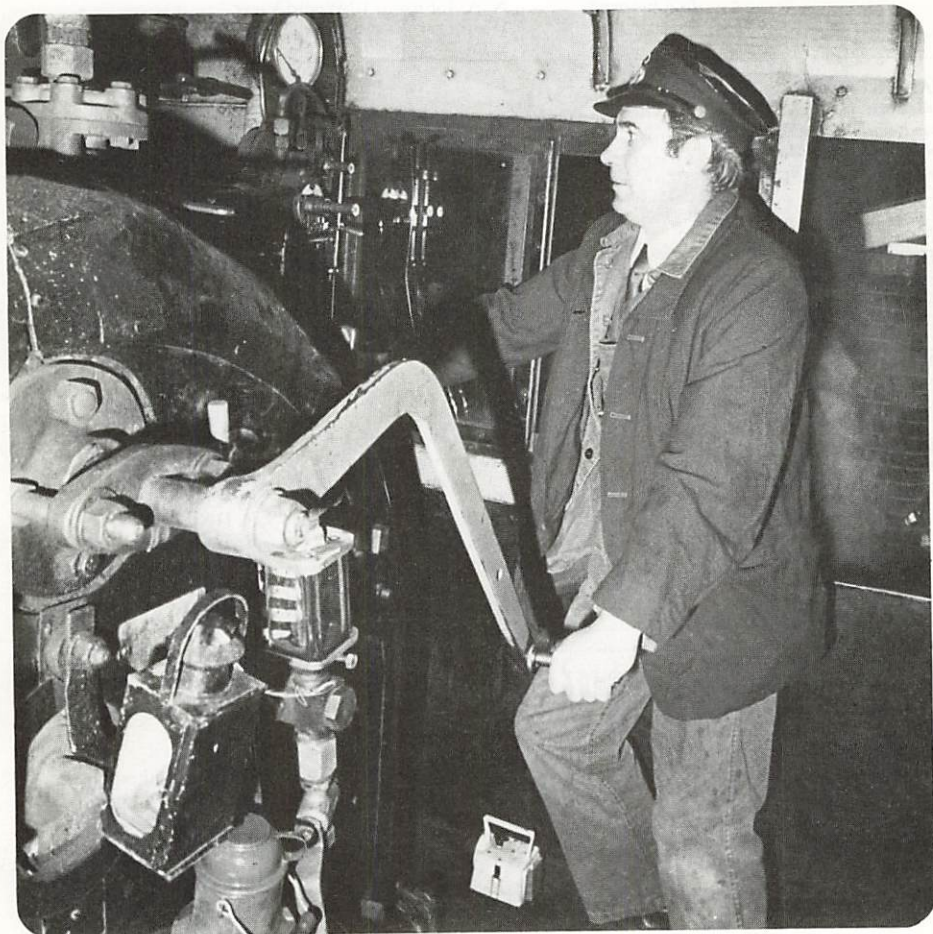
1984

Tenterden Terrier



Number 33

Spring 1984



Journal of the Tenterden Railway Company Limited
Proprietor of the Kent & East Sussex Railway

The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Registered charity 262481

DIRECTORS

M.R. Dunstone
D.J. Felton
J. Jeffries

E.J.R. Miller
P.C. Ramsden
D.M. Stratton

M.R. Vine
D.H. Wilson
G.C. Wright

SECRETARY & REGISTERED OFFICE

J. Jeffries, Tenterden Town Station, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6HE

Telephone: Tenterden (05806) 2943

Membership Secretaries:

New members

A-K Renewals

L-Z Renewals

J. Head, 1 Limes Close,
Tenterden, Kent TN30 7BB
A. Piggins, 98 Warwick Avenue,
Thorpe Lea, Egham, Surrey.
N. A. Johnson, 10 Weald View,
Wadhurst, East Sussex, TN5 6EB

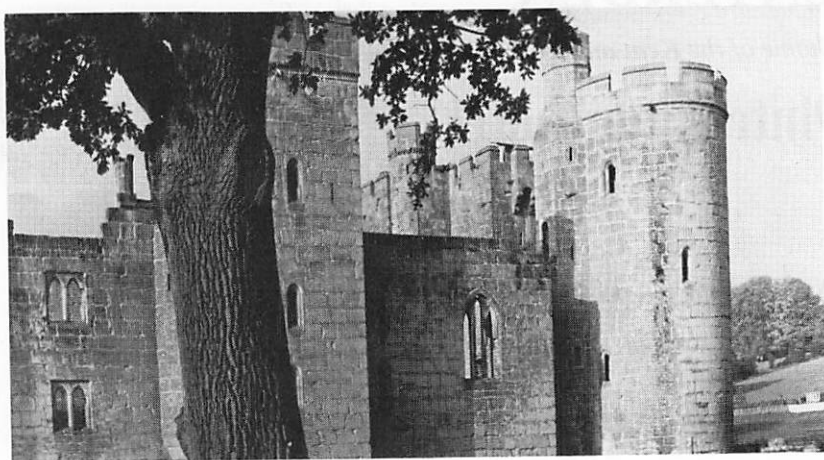
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<i>Keeper of the Archives</i>	E.J.R. Miller
<i>Historian</i>	P.D. Shaw
<i>Editor of "The Tenterden Terrier"</i>	P.D. Shaw
<i>and editorial office</i>	17 Chartfield Square, London SW15 6DR Telephone: 01-788 6608
<i>Assistant Editors</i>	P.C. Sutton, Telephone: Cranbrook 240236
<i>Magazine Advertising</i>	S.R. Garrett G.H. Benbow Telephone: Tenterden 3477

The Tenterden Terrier is published by the Tenterden Railway Company Ltd. three times yearly on the first Saturday of March, July and November. Articles, correspondence and photographs are welcome from both members and non-members and should be received at the Editorial office not less than two months before the due publication date. ISSN 0306-2449

Bodiam Castle

A National Trust Property



Sidney Concy

The Castle is open every day from April till October, but weekdays only November to March, between 10.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. or sundown if earlier. Closed over Christmas. Built in 1386 as a defence against the French, ruined in the Civil War, it still has a magical effect on every visitor. There is a café in the car park. About 500 yards from the K. & E.S.R. station.

Great Dixter



Sidney Concy

This 500 year old manor hall is open every afternoon (except ordinary Mondays) from 1st April to 14 October, also weekends October 20/21 and 27/28 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. (last admission 5 p.m.). The gardens, well known for the wide variety of plants is open earlier at 11 a.m. on May 27/28, Sundays in July & August, also August 27th. Some of the unusual plants have won awards at the Royal Horticultural Society shows in London. 1½ miles from the K. & E.S.R. station at Northiam; follow the signposts in the village for a very pleasant visit.

TENTERDEN

The home of the Kent and East Sussex Railway

White Lion Hotel



The White Lion sits prominently in the centre of Tenterden and is but a few minutes walk from the railway station. A warm and friendly welcome is extended to all visitors who are invited to try the comforts and olde world atmosphere of a 16th century Coaching Inn.

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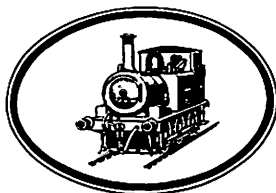
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The Tenterden Terrier



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Editorial

Pluses and Minuses

1983 was a year of contrasts; on the positive side, passengers carried rose by 2%, revenue was above expectations and the Wealden Pullman went from strength to strength. The bad news was that expenditure was substantially above budget, due mainly to unexpected problems arising on Wittersham Bank. As a result, we failed to balance the books and a drastic cutback in expenditure has been called for in 1984. The economics of our operations are marginal; unless we make a profit there is no hope of ploughing back sufficient income into restoring the track between Hexden and Bodiam. 1984 is our 10th Anniversary year; with the return to service of one and maybe two Terriers, coupled with visiting engines, the variety of motive power will be greatly enhanced. If we can improve the product our loadings will increase, but there is no room for complacency. Private Railways are no longer a licence to print money, profits are easy to spend but hard to earn – good housekeeping is essential not only for success but also for survival.

Graphics by Vandyke Design
Printed by L & T Press, Luton
1984

FRONT COVER

Halloween Special

*Brian Heyes at the controls of No. 22 Maunsell,
hauling the Wealden Pullman on 22nd October
1983*
[Brian Stephenson]

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1984

Compiled by Paul Sutton

As the Railway enters its 10th year of operation, concern is rightly being expressed at the current financial situation. However in the last decade we have achieved a great deal and have many facilities of which we should be proud. Vintage rolling stock, locomotive shed, carriage and wagon workshop, pits and signalling systems are among the assets which are the envy of many other preserved railways. We have proved that we can work hard to achieve our objectives; reopening to Northam and Bodiam must remain the top priority.

Locomotives

Following the end of passenger services at the New Year, all the current operating steam locomotives were successively put into "winterised" storage until Easter. Boilers, lubricators and injectors were drained, the motion and valve gear greased, tubes and smokeboxes swept and emptied and finally the engines were given a thorough cleaning. These tasks, which to the uninitiated, may appear unnecessary, prevent frost damage during the weather of January and February and ensure a speedy return to steampable condition.

During the preceding weeks the number of volunteers working at Rolvenden has been very high – 20 or more being not uncommon. This has meant that as well as routine maintenance and servicing, much progress has been made on locomotives not yet in service.

No. 3 Bodiam has, subject to the Inspector's report, had all its boiler work completed. Adrian Landi and Paul Hatcher have worked very hard in recent months to maintain progress. The smokebox has been re-riveted to the tube plate and a new joint ring made for the smokebox saddle. The frames were then cut and drilled to take it. 8 new stays were put in the firebox as well as some new plate-work being let into the back head and wasted areas built up. Similar treatment was given to the throat plate area which was also fitted with a new mudhole door and washout plug. The 8 tubes withdrawn last year for inspection were replaced to complete the boiler work. Concurrently, work has continued on the rest of the loco inside the shed. The cab and bunker have been refloored, new corners have been made for the side tanks and a steam brake cylinder fitted. Frames, buffer beams and cab are now appearing in top coat, together with some of the other fittings.

Work on Sutton is also proceeding very well,

indeed reports have been heard of a book being opened on which Terrier takes to the road first! No. 10 is looking much like its old self again, with the boiler back in the frames and new insulation and steel cladding reapplied. The blast pipe and chimney have been replaced and a start made on reassembling all the overhauled steam fittings. Some attention is being given to the cab roof and bunker platerwork.

Norman Payne has been employed by the owner of the 'P' Class, No. 11, to carry out some repairs to the boiler which will speed its return to an active life.

The first of the Drewry Diesels has entered service; with crew training trips to Tenterden being run during late January. Work on this loco, K. & E.S.R. No. 47, has been carried out by Dave Heywood and his team, with John Headey of Gardners very kindly coming down to Rolvenden to retune and set up the engine.

In the last issue of *The Tenterden Terrier*, it was erroneously reported that the Drewrys came from Tyne Docks & Harbour Board, whereas in fact they came from the Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority. Many thanks to member John Aston, who worked in the port, for pointing this out. Some facts have now been uncovered on these engines although their build and B.R. disposal dates have yet to be discovered. It seems that No. 45 is actually an 04 and Nos. 46 and 47 are both 03s.

Built	Date	B.R. No.	T&H.P.A. No.	K&ESR No.
Vulcan B.R.	195?	D.2205	6	45
Swindon B.R.	195?	D.2023	5	46
Swindon	195?	D.2024	4	47

An article on these locomotives and others on the K&E.S.R. in the late Fifties and early Sixties will now appear in the Summer issue.

No. 40, the B.T.H. diesel, continues to make steady progress, with control relays being fitted in the new vacuum brake exhauster, and all electrical control gear has now been replaced in the engine room, together with all pipework, fuel feeds and water systems. Painting both externally and internally continues when the weather permits.



No. 24, William H. Austen outside the Victoria Apollo theatre on 9th January 1984, with the cast of Andrew Lloyd-Webber's new musical Starlight Express, which opens at the theatre on 27th March 1984
[David Fowler]

At the end of last year, Fred French retired from his position as Locomotive Inspector. Many thanks to him for all his hard work and congratulations and good wishes go to Brian Heyes who succeeds him.

The steam mileage in 1983 showed an increase of 14½% over 1982 but diesel decreased by 21%. Individual performances are shown in the table below.

Locomotive Mileages				Total
No.	Name	1983	1982	Since 1974
12	Marcia	—	97	307
14	Charwelton	202	334	536
22	Maunsell	1619	2065	8019
23	H.F. Stephens	1380	611	9977
24	W.H. Austen	91	—	7048
25	Northiam	2488	1832	4451
41	Baglan Diesel	533	608	1418
42	Hunslet Diesel	875	841	2567
44	Railbus	338	771	1974
TOTAL FOR YEAR		7526	7159	

Carriage and Wagon

The double bolster wagon which arrived from Chatham Docks in April, has received an extensive overhaul and entered traffic in January. This vehicle has been identified as of Great Northern Railway origin, although the build date, builder and running number have not been established. It has a 27 ft. long body, 17ft. wheelbase and is fitted with two bolsters for carrying long loads.

Both the side and end boards have been renewed and a new timber floor fitted. The drawgear, damaged during Dockyard service, was straightened and adjusted and the vehicle has been painted dark brown and lettered G.N. The majority of the restoration was carried out by Gordon Young and Peter Carey.

The Midland Railway covered goods van which also arrived from Chatham Docks last April has received much attention from owner John Colwell, and, on occasional midweek visits, his parents! The roof boards have been renewed and new canvas fitted. At one end of

the van, all the end and several side boards have been replaced as well as many floor boards. It has been painted in Midland Railway light grey but as yet the running number and build date have not been established.

Work on Maunsell B.S.O. 54 is progressing steadily with two of the three seating bays stripped of old varnish although other work on this vehicle has stopped to enable other projects to be completed. However it is hoped to have it in service during 1984.

Conversion of the P.M.V. for Wealden Pullman services has advanced considerably, being carried out mainly by John Liddell, Malcolm Webb and Norman Chalfont. The interior has been fitted with two bulkheads and storage cupboards and shelves, and has been painted, brown and cream with a white ceiling. Externally it has received the first coat of Southern Malachite Green, requiring only the final top coat and varnishing, and the corridor connection remains to be fitted to one end.

During December all the marquetry panels were removed from Pullman "Barbara" and despatched to Dunns of Chelmsford for full restoration. Work has started on the overhaul of the vehicle although to date this has been confined to varnish stripping in the corridors and vestibules.

Stock Arrivals

From Chatham Dockyard to Wittersham Road, 29th September 1983.

L.M.S. 12 ton Standard Covered Goods Van M501348 Wolverton 1934 Lot 768

G.W.R. Twin Bolsters. No details known.

From Tunbridge Wells West to Northiam, 10th December 1983.

BP 160 built 1898 registered by N.E. Railway.

BP 529 built 1900 registered by Taff Vale Railway.

Both 10 ton tanks, wooden framed, spoked wheels and used for storage of diesel fuel oil for the past 20 years.



Shunting the mixed at Tenterden Town, 22nd October 1983

[Brian Stephenson]

Signal & Telegraph

Remedial work has recently been necessary to the home signal at Tenterden where the lattice posts on the upper part were badly corroded. They have now been replaced by renovated and repainted parts, which have been in store at Tenterden for sometime, much improving the appearance of the signal. Work continues steadily behind the carriage shed at Tenterden on restoring the lever frame which will, in due course, be fitted into the signal box at Rolvenden. Following completion of the sewage works siding in January it is hoped that the removal of stored locomotives from Rolvenden Yard will speed the signalling and subsequent passing of trains there. In addition, to be completed before the start of next season is the reconnection and testing of signals at Wittersham Road, which were disconnected to facilitate work on Wittersham Bank.

Building

Two main centres of activity have been occupying the few members of the department in recent months. Efforts were concentrated on making the Carriage & Wagon shed extension weatherproof. Two round-topped metal windows are being fitted in the end which, together with the feature brickwork and roof cladding matching the station, makes the extension a very creditable piece of work.

Another task, also at Tenterden, has been the extension to the platform. This has a brick face & block inner skin. Spoil from No. 3 carriage road will be dumped in the void and eventually, when it has been filled and completed, the Wealden Pullman train set will be victualled from the opposite face.

Permanent Way

Services between Wittersham Road and Hexden Bridge had to be suspended in late September due to the unsatisfactory state of the track. Four hundred years of track were dismantled and removed, enabling our contractor to dig out about two feet of clay beneath the track bed. This spoil has been used to raise the level of the yard at Wittersham Road station, ready for its future use as a Permanent Way depot.

Once the earth had gone a fleet of lorries brought in several hundred tonnes of minestone waste, which was spread over the clay to a depth of more than a foot.

After the installation of porous pipe drainage along both sides of the cutting, a layer of ballast

was spread over and the track relaid, reconnection taking place on the last working day before Christmas.

Jobs remaining to be done are the lifting of the track onto deeper ballast, and the installation of drains in the banks themselves. When this is completed we should have a length of line which will be able to stand the level of traffic which we expect in the future, and will not be subject to the sinking problems which we have experienced recently.

Thanks are due to the C.P. gang, headed by Dick Dickson, for the progress on this major project, the largest of its kind undertaken by the railway to date.

Maintenance of the rest of the operating sections is now being reorganised, and working parties are operating each Saturday and Sunday, starting from Rolvenden at about 9.30 a.m. A committee consisting of Dick Dickson, Phil Rimmer, Dave Hazeldine and Max Dunstone meet regularly to consider the work priorities and plans are in hand covering the next few months. Please contact any of them if you can offer help.

Our thanks to members of the Thameside Group who have recently offered their help in the routine maintenance following the decision not to continue with the Bodiam to Dixer railbus service this summer. They are at present working alternate weekends on the section between Rolvenden and Popes Cottage.

The track panels and catch point for the siding by the sewage works were laid in over the weekend of 21st/22nd January.

Clearance

The section from Hexden to the Rother Bridge was completed in early Autumn. On 6th November a group started work in Sussex and has thoroughly cleared more than 300 yards from Northiam station back towards Wittersham. During the Winter break from running, the operational length has been receiving some much needed attention, but in the late Spring, the group will return to the Rother Bridge/Northiam section.

During January a 3 acre field west of Tenterden level crossing, recently acquired for car parking, was fenced off from adjoining land. Later in the year, gates will be erected at the entrance to the ground, part of which was rented as a car park during 1983.

Special thanks go to Wildernesse School at



Who is improperly dressed? Kissogram Girls at a retirement party held aboard the Wealden Pullman on 16th December 1983
[Jim Berryman]

Sevenoaks, who, in the two years that they have been helping us, have brought some 200 boys over 20 weekends. This remarkable record would not have been possible without Mr. Tullet who drives the school minibus. Anyone else who would like to join the Group for a stimulating day out in the fresh air should contact Alan Tebboth on Maidstone 676818.

Commercial

There was a slight upturn in trade in 1983 in spite of our May Gala weekend cancellations and poor weather at the country show. We ended the season on January 1st having carried some 21% more passengers than 1982, excluding Wealden Pullman and special charter passengers. This is a very creditable increase compared with many of our contemporaries.

These satisfying figures must be attributed to the extra effort put in by everyone on the railway which provided some novel attractions such as mixed trains in October, two-train service on Bank Holidays and the Hogmanay Punch Bowl Specials, all of which were very

successful and will be expanded upon in next year's programme.

Quite apart from passenger figures, all of our commercial activities enjoyed increases in 1983 over the previous year. In gross income terms, Colonel Stephens' Railway Shop was some 17% up, the buffet activities 39% up and our filming and special charters 10%, with every indication that profit from these elements will have shown a very healthy rise.

Hopefully the events planned for the 1984 season, our Tenth Anniversary of operating, plus the re-entry into service of the Terrier locomotives will improve our profitability, and increase our passenger figures, assuming of course we have enough carriages for them to ride in!

Marketing

1984 marks the 10th Anniversary of the re-opening of the railway in 1974. This important landmark will be celebrated throughout the coming season and a special anniversary logo has been designed which will feature on all publicity material and on a range of exclusive

'Colonel Stephens Railway Shop' souvenirs. To mark the official re-opening date, a 'Tenth Anniversary Gala Weekend' will be held on 2/3 June, organised by former chairman, Mark Yonge.

The colour leaflet for 1984 has been simplified and improved and the print run increased by 20%. This was delivered from our printers in early January. The successful "7 Wonders of the Weald" partnership with 6 other attractions in the locality has been strengthened with the entry of Battle Abbey into the scheme in the place of our friends at Woodchurch Windmill who pulled out at the end of 1983. The joint brochure has been completely revised and is printed in eye-catching black and orange. The print run has been increased by 30%.

The new hanging display card features a colour picture of 'Sutton' carrying the re-opening headboard at Tenterden Town Station 10 years ago – linking our anniversary with the planned return to steam of the historic locomotive in June.

Two important coach operators workshops have been attended. Excursions '84 is aimed at the day-trip market and Mark Toynbee and

Doug Lindsay represented the railway on the 7 Wonders of the Weald stand. The same pair attended Heritage Education Fair aimed at the school visit market. Our leaflet and party travel information has been mailed to 1000 coach companies and it is hoped that this will bring additional business during 1984. A similar mailing prior to the Santa Special trains brought good results.

Distribution of publicity material will be improved and to this end, the professional services of a merchandising agency, Wilson and Shaw Promotions Ltd (no connection with our own well-loved pair!) have been engaged. However, this will in no way diminish the important work of our own members distributing publicity in their local area, place of work etc.

Other marketing initiatives in which we are participating for the first time are the British Rail sponsored Rail-Riders club for the under 15s and the Television South Viewers Club. A joint promotion is planned with Kent brewers, Shepherd Neame, through their numerous tied houses.

The railway continues to feature extensively in



Loading concrete sleepers at Wittersham Road on 2nd January 1984

[Paul Sutton]

the press, but to help monitor the take-up of our news stories, members are asked to send any newspaper cutting featuring the railway to Mark Toynbee, the Public Relations Officer at Tenterden Town Station.

The marketing department exceeded every target set for it by the Board in 1983 and it is anticipated that with the innovations and careful planning undertaken this winter, our 10th Anniversary year will prove to be a bumper one.

Wealden Pullman

The Wealden Pullman has had yet another record year with some 2,500 passengers, a 15% increase on 1982, enjoying the delights of our premier service, plus about 300 more diners served on special charter Pullmans. Our Wealden Pullman train was used nearly 50 times last season, including the two days of afternoon tea trains in early April. All this emphasises the tremendous amount of effort that Pullman volunteers put into a service that is now vital to our viability.

After the last scheduled train on November 5th, Bar Car "Barbara" was withdrawn for essential refurbishment during the closed season, and was booked into the Carriage &

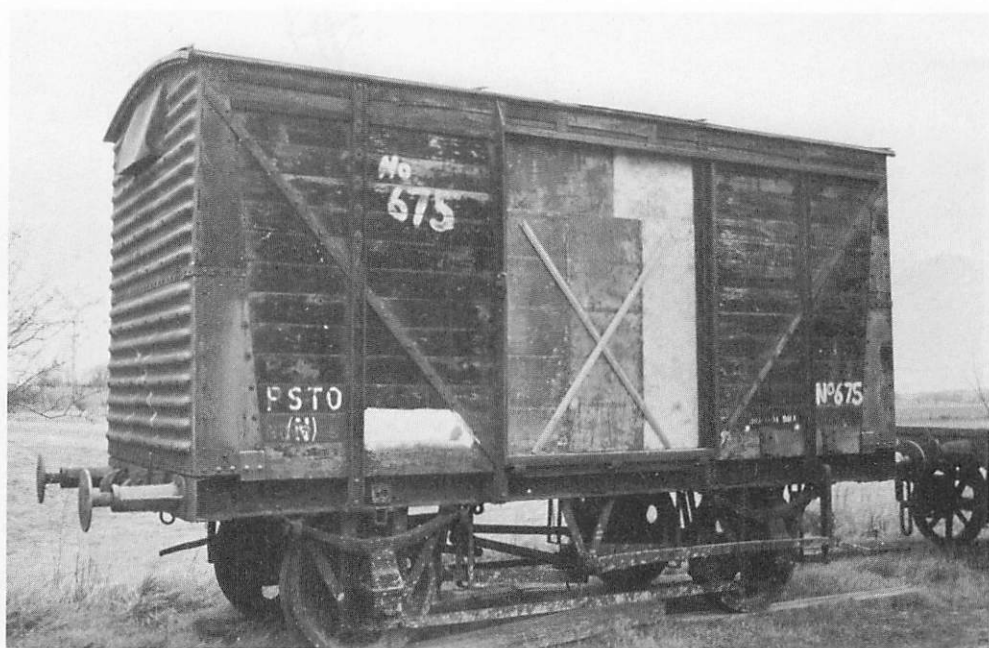
Wagon shed on Sunday 22nd January. By the time services commence on April 21st she will be in resplendent condition once more.

Sixty people enjoyed the annual staff dinner held at the White Lion Hotel, Tenterden, on 17th December. A toast to George Mortimer Pullman was proposed by Attendant Shaw and to the Kent & East Sussex Railway by Pullman Manager, Kit Lindlar.

Finance

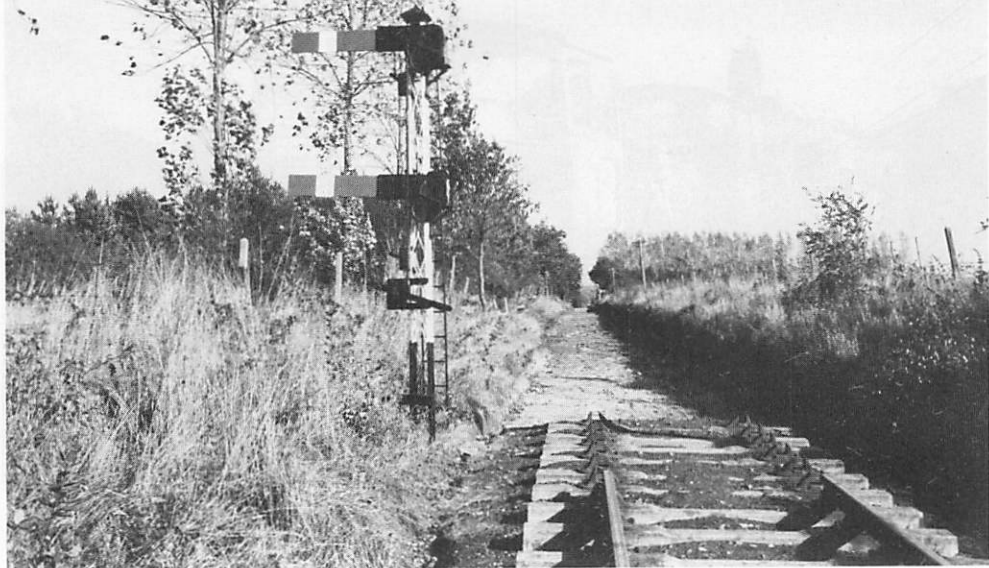
Despite an unexpected £3000 loss on the Tenterden Country Show, the Railway's sources of income were well up to budget in 1983. However, expenditure exceeded the targeted figure, due primarily to heavy track repairs on Wittersham bank, which were carried out at a cost of some £12000. As a result, the Railway incurred a substantial trading loss last year and it has regretfully been necessary to make one of the Company's three full-time employees, Dave Levett, redundant. A further pruning of expenditure will be necessary in order to achieve a satisfactory outcome in 1984.

Some statistics have now been provided on the 1983 draw, which was so ably organised by Cliff Wicks. 10,910 tickets were sold which,



12 ton L.M.S. van at Wittersham Road, 22nd October 1983.

[Paul Sutton]



The end of the line at Wittersham bank, 22nd October 1983

[Neil Rose]

after deduction of all expenses, realised a sum of £2,013. Contrary to the report on page 17 of the last issue of *The Tenterden Terrier*, all the money raised has been allocated to the rebuilding budget for No. 3 Bodiam. There were 7 prizewinners, four coming from Kent and three from the London area.

Area Group News

Ashford. During 1983 the group realised over £700 from various fund raising activities. The next major event is the Annual Model Railway Exhibition on 10th March at the Centre piece, Bank Street, Ashford from 10.00-17.00.

A talk was given to Boughton Aluph W.I. in January by Eric Graves who was surprised at the numbers of those present who hadn't heard of the railway; the evening concluded with the promise of an outing to the K.&E.S.R. later this year to ride on an afternoon tea train.

We've moved again! The Group now meets at the B.R. Sports and Social Club, Beaver Road, Ashford. This is next to the B&Q Superstore and roughly 3 minutes walk from the Station. Open meetings are still held on the 3rd Wednesday in the month and a warm welcome awaits all newcomers. Mr. Llong, the BR club Secretary, used to be a fireman and wielded a shovel several times on the K.&E.S.R. back in the Fifties. Perhaps he might like to re-live his old days later on this year?

Maidstone. As in previous years, the Group was responsible for actively publicising the Santa Specials and all banks, insurance companies and large stores and offices in

Maidstone were given a supply of booking forms. These were also circulated to schools, post offices and public houses in surrounding villages.

The date for the Annual Model Railway exhibition is Saturday and Sunday 24th/25th March at Trinity Hall, Church Street, Maidstone. Ron Lobeck, the T.V.S. Weather Man had accepted an invitation to open the show but was subsequently reminded of a prior family commitment so he kindly persuaded Mike Debens, the Coast to Coast presenter to deputise for him. Ron and Mike both hope to have a meal on the Wealden Pullman on Saturday 19th May but may have to draw lots for the 4 available tickets!

The waste paper collection in 1983 raised £1,082 and together with our accumulated balance from 1982 enabled us to donate £249 to the Terrier fund and £1,220 to the restoration of the B.T.H. Diesel.

A mill offering a better price for waste paper has been located at Tovil, so please keep up the good work in 1984.

Meetings on the last Wednesday of each month have resumed at the Kimberly-Clark Social Club, Tonbridge Road, Maidstone. The 1984 programme will be printed in the next edition of the *Rooter*. There is still plenty of room for more Maidstone area members to come to these meetings where they are assured of a warm welcome and an enjoyable evening.

Sussex. The Group concluded a successful year, during which £1400 was raised, with the



DH 400 0-6-0 shunter, the property of Resco (Railways) Ltd, undergoing trials at Rolvenden, 22nd October 1983
[Brian Stephenson]

A.G.M. in December. The existing committee was unanimously re-elected. Following the business, a talk was given on the railways of the German Federal Republic.

Work at Northiam Station has been proceeding steadily with the outside of the building at the rear being repainted and the platform canopy, reboarded. Inside, the Ticket Office floor was renewed, the only treasures found in the dust below being two B.R. return halves – one to London and the other to Orpington.

Details of the 1984 programme of meetings is in the current issue of the *Router*.

Thameside. The Group has “adopted” a half-mile section of the operating line and undertaken to re-sleeper and maintain it in good order. The first working Sunday was 29th January and others are scheduled on 11th and 25th March and 8th April, the working party meeting at Rolvenden at 9.00 am. If anyone has other days to spare in the week, please contact George Wright, who goes down frequently, on Erith 42757.

The next social function is a formal Dinner and Dance at the Falconwood Social Club on Saturday 31st March. The Thameside Group would be pleased to welcome other members to this event up to their limit of 80 seats and those interested should contact Sue Jarvis.

At the end of 1983 Charlie Masterson retired from the position of chairman. Group members are very grateful to him for his dedication and hard work over the previous years and wish him luck with his ambition to become a Driver. Kevin Jarvis became the new Chairman on 1st January 1984.

The Group has recently paid £517 for the resurfacing of Bodiam Level crossing and a further £500 is earmarked for the restoration of No. 3 should it be required.

Members living in the Thameside area who would like to join the group should contact the Secretary, Sue Jarvis, on Dartford (0322) 78624.

Weald. The group continues to hold its meetings monthly at Tonbridge and an interesting programme of speakers has attracted approximately 20 people to each. Paul Ramsden recently gave a fascinating insight into the coaching and freight stock on the K.&E.S.R. Small lotteries have lately been run at these meetings, making a useful profit.

Payments for the Dogfish hopper wagon have been completed but the Group's fund raising activities continue unabated. The next event, a sponsored walk, will take place on Sunday 29th April along the track-bed of the Groombridge to East Grinstead line, which is now a designated countryside path. There will be staging posts serving light refreshments en route.

In the early Summer, members Mr. and Mrs. Green have kindly agreed to allow the Group to offer strawberry cream teas at their home in West Malling, as a different way of raising money.

Until now the Weald Area Group has been known mainly for its fund raising activities, but is currently on the look-out for a suitable project for members to undertake on the railway!

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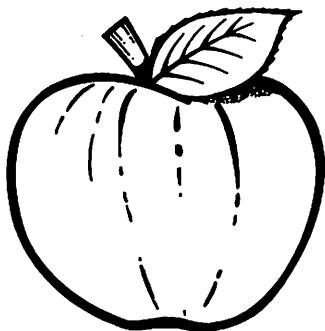
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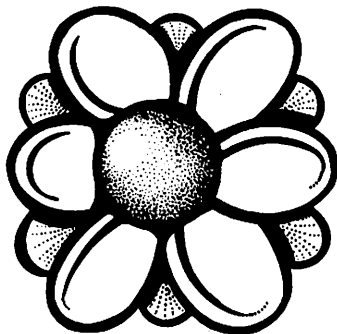
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* INTERFLORA *

Colonel Stephens' Railway Shop

"I notice there is a fall in sales of postcards at your station. During July and August, the busiest passenger season, you have not sold a single packet. You must push these sales and show a better result."

(Memo from H.F. Stephens to Station Agent, Dyer, 6th September 1907, whose reply, if there was one, has not survived.)

In the heyday of light railways between the wars, Colonel Stephens adopted a variety of schemes to supplement meagre passenger revenues, varying from the hire of (commodious) camping huts and fishing boats on adjacent sites, to the sale of postcards, guide books and chocolate at stations. In the light of today's train services, when we do not have any freight traffic to sustain our earnings, it is vital to generate a healthy income from retailing books and souvenirs.

In the early years following re-opening, the shop at Tenterden was manned entirely by volunteers, but this was found to be unsatisfactory when traffic developed and a certain amount of weekday running was introduced.

In 1979, Tony Hocking, one of the founder members of the original Preservation Society, entered into a licence agreement with the Company to operate the shop at Tenterden on a full time basis. The arrangement continued until the end of 1981, when Tony Hocking decided to transfer his business, including the name, The Buffer Stop Shop, to the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway and the Tenterden premises reverted to Company management under the control of myself as the newly appointed Commercial Manager.

In view of the Company's well known connections with Colonel Stephens and with a Colonel Stephens Railway Museum already part of the attractions, it was felt that the identity of the shop would benefit from becoming Colonel Stephens' Railway Shop.

The first task was to appraise the previous business, decide on new lines and then restock in time for the 1982 season, which was fast approaching. It became known that the Railway was to be honoured by a visit from H.M. Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, in June in her capacity as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and a hectic programme of refurbishment coincided very nicely with the recent change of name. Arrangements were made to have a commemorative postal cover printed to record the Royal visit, which would

be carried on the inaugural 'Lord Warden' train.

Commemorative and first day covers formed quite a large proportion of the Shop's business at the time, but most of this was lost with Tony Hocking's departure. Sales of model railway equipment also dropped substantially, but this was mainly as a result of a policy decision, due to the fact that large mail order houses were able to offer prices with which it was almost impossible to compete.

Increased emphasis was placed on high margin products and in 1983 the split of retail sales was 55% souvenirs, 33% books, 9% confectionary and 3% models. The total value of stocks at any one time is within the range £12,000 to £15,000, although it is hoped to reduce this and thereby release working capital for use elsewhere.

Although Tenterden is the primary outlet for sales, a small proportion of turnover is generated at Rolvenden and Wittersham Road when those stations are manned and around 7½% by our outside sales force in the guise of Colonel Stephens' Roadshow. The Roadshow, consisting of a sales and membership stand and occasionally a pump trolley, visits between ten and twenty exhibitions, fetes and trade events each year. In addition, some of our Area Groups, in particular Sussex, enjoyed a busy season in 1983 and there is the possibility of Northiam being opened up as a sales point in 1984.

In 1982, the first year of operation, the shop achieved a 'spend per passenger' of 73p and a total gross profit of approximately £10,000 – considerably more than the licence fee received under the previous arrangements, although the company does now have to finance its stocks and allocate a certain proportion of the Commercial Manager's salary to the operating costs. The corresponding figures for 1983 are expected to be £14,000 and 83p, comfortably ahead of inflation and achieved during a year when the company recorded a very modest growth in passenger numbers. This is partly attributed to the fact that we are able to remain open for longer hours than in 1982 due to the



The shop interior; the Author is on the centre left

[Brian Stephenson]

employment of some part time staff under the Government's Community Programme. Nevertheless, the whole operation would not be viable but for the tremendous effort put in by our volunteer sales force, some of whom also put in sterling service elsewhere on the line.

We enter our tenth Anniversary year with plans

to enlarge the range of goods on offer and with a plea to any of our members who enjoy meeting people to come and join the team so that in the words of our Founder we can "push these sales and show a better result."

Doug Lindsay

Book Reviews

THE NEW ROMNEY BRANCH LINE written and published by Peter A. Harding. 32 pages illustrated. Price £1.50.

This is the second booklet by Peter Harding on Kent Branch Lines and has benefitted from his experience in writing the first on the Hawkhurst Branch.

This fascinating line – now reduced to siding status – carries only spent fuel containers from the Dungeness Power Stations, although representations have been made in recent years for the re-introduction of a passenger service from Lydd to Appledore and Ashford.

The book has been well laid out with history of the line, description of the route, motive power, etc. all being clearly described. There are some well chosen photographs which on the whole have reproduced well. However, space should have been found for a picture of modern freight workings and a contents page would have been helpful.

MILITARY RAILWAYS IN KENT by R.M. Lyne. Published by North Kent Books. 48 pages. Illustrated. Price £1.25.

The reviewer picked up the book with great anticipation as he has keen interest in things military as well as railways! However, the publication proves to be somewhat disappointing in the lack of information on some of the Establishments and lines described, possibly because they've been gone for so long.

The text on the railway guns on our line at Rolvenden and Wittersham Road is far too brief and totally inaccurate; however the Author has promised to rectify this in the next edition.

There are some good clear diagrams and maps although the K.&E.S.R. is not named on the main one, and many of the photographs have not been published before; P Class tanks at Richborough were especially interesting. Another book suffering from the lack of contents and index pages.

P.C.S.

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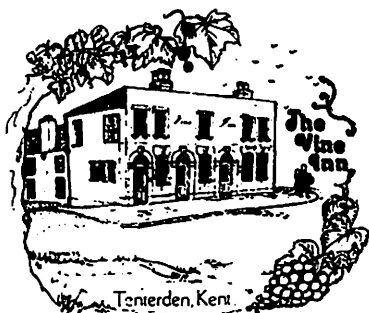
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Confusion Worst Confounded

An extract from *Branch Line News* of 1st December 1983

"Kent & East Sussex Railway (*Branch Line News* 477 P 253/83 – 40A) Confounded confusions; Firstly, your correspondents don't seem to realise that the Bodiam-Dixter section is isolated from the rest of the operative KESR (the bit from Hexden Bridge to Dixter Halt has not yet reopened). It certainly operated (as advertised) this summer – altho' I question whether it started in May 1981. (*Branch Line News* 420 p 143/83, records "Steam at Bodiam" on 30 and 31 August 1981; the *Journal of the Transport Ticket Society* mentioned that this had also occurred on 24 and 25 May 1981 – A.M.J.)

Secondly, there may well have been a large hole in the track between Bodiam and Dixter in October; the line is only open on a seasonal basis and in 1983 trains were scheduled in July and August. However, it remains correct to quote a reopening, and the entry in *Branch Line News* 476 p 237/83 must stand, showing (as it does) to reopening of a seasonal service. Likewise, the second item (40B) refers to the position in September, where no trains were scheduled between Bodiam and Dixter. On 18 September trains certainly did run from

Wittersham Road to Hexden Bridge (I travelled on one!)"

Dixter Halt was officially reopened on 23rd May 1981 by Mr. Quentin Lloyd, the owner of Great Dixter house, when a special train from Bodiam, comprising No. 12 "Marcia", the District Railway coach and L.&N.W.R. brake van conveyed invited guests and group members for the opening ceremony. Subsequent to this all services have been operated by the A.C. cars Railbus. The pattern was repeated over the August Bank holiday of that year and during the Spring & August bank holidays of 1982. In 1983, trains were run over the spring bank holiday, on every Sunday in July and August and on August Bank Holiday Monday. There are probably plenty of large holes in the track between Bodiam and Dixter and indeed elsewhere on the line. The section of track between Wittersham Road and Hexden Bridge was officially reopened on 25th April 1983 by Robert Neame, Chairman of South East England Tourist Board. Most trains terminated there until the end of September, when this service was suspended for heavy track repairs, now largely completed. – Ed

Branch Line News is published twice monthly by the Branch Line Society



A.C. Cars railbus goes through the level crossing gates at Bodiam on 28th August 1983 [Paul Sutton]

Tickets Please!

An analysis of passengers carried in 1983 and an outline of services planned for 1984.

	1982				1983			
	Op Days	Trains	Passengers	Av per Train	Op Days	Trains	Passengers	Av per Train
March/Apr	9	40	3357	84	12	41	3335	81
May	13	70	3807	54	10	37	4120	111
June	12	50	3550	71	17	65	5583	86
July	18	75	7565	101	18	68	6215	91
August	31	133	10395	78	31	123	9383	76
Sept.	11	51	3058	60	10	39	2395	61
October	11	53	1104	21	11	38	1383	36
November	5	20	205	10	5	15	348	23
Dec/Jan	9	31	5506	178	11	37	6051	164
	119	523	38547	74	125	463	38813	84
Wealden Pullman		35	2283	65		40	2535	64
		558	40830	73		503	41348	82
Privileges & Passes			1624				2279	
		558	42454	76		503	43627	87

Note: The statistics include: 1147 single journeys made by fare paying passengers (1982 707) and 1111 Rover tickets (1982 77) otherwise all bookings shown are returns. The difference in the sales of Rover tickets is accounted for by the fact that these tickets only were available over the May Day Holiday weekend.

Total passengers carried increased by a modest 2% in 1983 although this was still slightly below the 1981 achievement. An encouraging feature was the 13% increase in average loadings per train, particularly in respect of the mid-week school trains in June & July. The "Wealden Pullman" once again ran to full capacity and the importance of this service to our viability should not be underestimated. All commercial activities exceeded their financial targets due entirely to the hard work and innovations carried out by the individual departments.

The most exciting prospect for our 10th Anniversary Year is the introduction of a 2-train service on holiday weekends and Sundays in July and August. This operation calls for strict timekeeping and it is hoped that all operating staff will rise to the challenge! Following an increase in the number of prospective customers on summer Saturday mornings, it has been decided to introduce, experimentally, an 11.45 service in July and August. The highly successful 'mixed' trains we ran in October (see Hugh Nightingale's

delightful study in the February *Railway World*) will be repeated this year and extended to three Sundays in November. December 2 will be a diesel day, with haulage by an '03' or the newly renovated Ford Bo-Bo. The "Wealden Pullman" service is heavily booked for the first half of the season and because of the demand for seats, we have decided to ballot the applications.

1984 promises to be an interesting and exciting year, with varied motive power and a number of special events, which are listed below:-

6 May – Ladies Day – The Railway operated entirely by the fair sex!

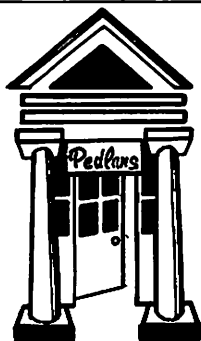
2/3 June – 10th Anniversary Gala with Terrier No 10 'Sutton' in steam plus a guest engine.

22 July – Weald of Kent Bus Rally.

25/26/27 August – Summer Steam Spectacular — everything in steam!

4 November – Poppy Day Specials, with military vehicle display.

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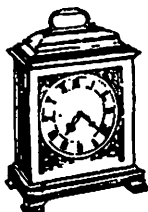


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Rebuilding Wittersham Bank

Photographed by Hugh Nightingale

Services had to be suspended between Wittersham Road and Hexden Bridge at the end of September, whilst the track was lifted, the track bed dug out and several hundred tonnes of minestone ballast spread over the formation. The work should be completed in time for the commencement of services on 1st April 1984.



Dropping a wooden sleeper panel into position, 22nd December 1983



Sleeper relaying near the summit, 30th November 1983



Pitching the new drains, 22nd November 1983

Notice of Closure

Part 2: Footplate Farewell, 30 December, 1953

At the very end of October 1953 came the fateful news of the closing of all passenger traffic over the lines of what was until 1948 the Kent and East Sussex Railway. The sentence of execution came as no surprise; it turned out exactly as the yard-master at Tenterden Town had forecast to me in September. More stunning, so I was to hear, was the decision to close down Rolvenden locomotive shed, dispatching the Terriers to St. Leonards whence they were to work up the line twice daily on goods trains via Robertsbridge. This was only made known to the Shed staff two days before Christmas, with the offer of posts at St. Leonards or Ashford and left the engine crews, who resided locally, in somewhat of a dilemma. British Railways could surely hope to economise little by closing down Rolvenden shed; after January 4th they would have to pay the respective railwaymen's fares each day to and from their new depot, as well as the extra locomotive mileage from St. Leonards.

My application for a footplate pass for Wednesday, December 30th over the line between Robertsbridge and Headcorn was favourably received by the Motive Power

Superintendent. I had just completed National Service and written in my application on Regimental notepaper, signing myself under my rank as Lieutenant! This may well have done the trick.

Charing Cross was left behind on the 10.25 am to Hastings on a very foggy day, such a contrast to the sunshine of the few days over Christmas. By Tonbridge, where a change was made to the slow train, 30906 had lost over twenty minutes. Number 30900 Eton, a little undignified at the head of the 11.28 am stopping at all stations train, caught up ten of these minutes, not so much by fast running, as by smart station work, where at three stops no one alighted nor boarded the train. The fog was rapidly clearing as we crossed into Sussex, and the sun came out between the woods and hills, a beautiful but most uneven countryside. However, the day was generally unkind to photographers, and the fog hung over the Rother valley and thickened towards the evening.

At Robertsbridge, the faithful Terrier was in the bay with its mixed train, full of enthusiasts



The 8.50 am Headcorn to Robertsbridge mixed, approaching Rolvenden on 26th April 1952, Headed by 01 class 31048
[Pamlin Prints]



Class 01 31065 rounding Orpins Curve, towards Rolvenden on 29th December 1953 [R.H. Tunstall]

who must have come from quite a distance. There was just time to take a snap, greet the guard in whose brake van I had ridden from Rolvenden to Headcorn in September and to make my acquaintance with Nelson Wood, the senior driver cum shed foreman at Rolvenden, and Fireman G. Masters. Their steed was 32678, the same engine which a few years earlier had left an embankment near Wittersham Road and fallen into the marsh. Thoughtfully provided for the extra passenger on board, she had acquired a larger cab space than sister engine 32670, and ran most smoothly during the whole journey.

Robertsbridge and its few sidings, in which stood Mogul 31879, were soon left behind as we curved sharply to the right to join the River Rother which was to be our companion 'till a mile short of Wittersham Road. We sauntered gaily past Salehurst Halt in very flat country with marshland by the Rother on our left while the bare poles standing in the empty hopfields made the landscape look extremely bleak. Our first stop was a few yards short of Junction Road Halt where a most interesting piece of

shunting was to be performed by using a rope to send two wagons into a facing siding alongside – a technique now very uncommon in this country, somewhat unofficial and, if not performed with the greatest care, somewhat dangerous. The only alternative would have been to take the wagons all the way to Rolvenden and shunt them backwards into the siding from the next train to Robertsbridge. However the manoeuvre was expertly performed to the delight of the trainload of enthusiasts and photographers. With two wagons less behind her, the Terrier moved on to Bodiam where the castle could be dimly discerned across the river between the trees, while the fog was seen to be returning.

The train now hurtled along the flat lying track beside the river and its many little drainage channels, to reach Northiam, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles on and 7 miles from Robertsbridge, entering the loop and changing tokens for the sections. On the timetable this was the official terminus for passengers because, with shunting liable to go on for anything up to half an hour, undue patience could hardly be expected from

carriage occupants. However, there was only a minimum of shunting to be carried out, involving the despatch of a wagon into the sidings, again facing, which adjoined the station. The brake van had been dropped off round the corner, the wagon by the platform, and engine, coach and one ran round the wagon, collected it for despatch into the siding. Afterwards the brake was picked up and the train, still full of enthusiastic passengers, was all set to continue its unofficial journey.

A stop was made at Wittersham Road but no shunting took place, and the last $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Rolvenden – 12 miles from Robertsbridge – were taken most briskly. Driver Wood exhibited the power of the eighty year old Stroudley Terrier in a burst of speed along this finely graded stretch, reaching somewhere about 40 mph at one stage, 42 I heard from an enthusiast who had travelled in the coach behind and calculated the speed by the number of railbeats to the minute! This I considered a trifle optimistic, especially as we were running for long stretches on old SE&CR metals of solid steel; the modern rail like the modern coinage contained a high proportion of alloy.

The entry round the curve into Rolvenden was heralded by a battery of cameras and over a

dozen railway fans who had come from the other end by the 12.30 pm from Headcorn which had delivered its load before returning to Tenterden Town to shunt. There was a brief check at the home signal before 32678 delivered her load beside the platform.

The sight which greeted us at Rolvenden was amazing – 4 engines in steam – a very rare occurrence since the more prosperous days astride the Great War. The cause behind all this seething activity was a ballast train which had come from Ashford, and departed from Headcorn behind 01 0-6-0 31048 at 9 am. The 01 had discharged its load into a siding on the platform side of the line and retired for a siesta in the shed just before we arrived. It had previously made a delivery of ballast a mile down the line towards Wittersham Road, an unusual happening since 01s were banned from the Robertsbridge section. However, the risks in this case were quite negligible since the next bridge was more than two miles further on. Nevertheless the staff were not going to take this on again and Terrier 32655 – still with Fratton shedplate 71D – was prepared and soon puffed out of the shed to collect its section of the ballast train.

Now the fun – or rather the headache for the



Terrier 32678 and 01 31065 at Rolvenden, 29th December 1953

[R.H. Tunstall]



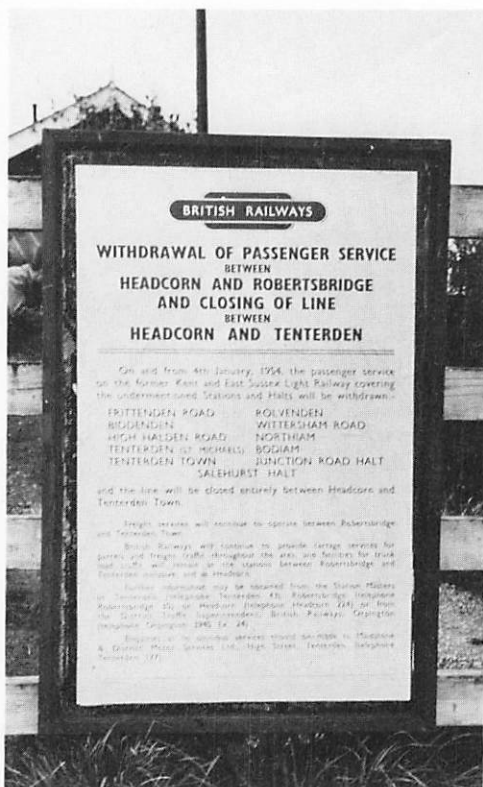
The 1.10 pm train from Northiam headed by Terrier 32678, entering Rolvenden on 30th December 1953 [S.C. Nash]

Rolvenden staff – began for 32655, which required water, and the only tank was situated opposite at the south end of the station platform along which lay the remains of the 12.20 pm ex-Robertsbridge. Just across the level crossing, beyond the north end of the station, heralded by stalwart whistles from round the corner, 31065 following completion of shunting at Tenterden, ground to a halt a bare twenty yards from the buffers of Terrier 32678. The latter backed its train into the run-round loop, 31065 retired a few hundred yards to allow room for the two long ballast wagons and their brake van, and so 32655 was able to back its train until it was opposite the tank to take on water. Then amid a further battery of cameras, the ballast train departed round the bend out of sight, and the 01 and Terrier 32678 were able to offload ashes and take on coal in turn before commencing their late afternoon turns.

There was now time to consume a sandwich lunch, to converse with enthusiasts and photographers, to note down details from the

shed notice board, in the course of which I was mistaken for a reporter, to confirm that rosters No. 390 and 391 would cease from next Monday, and to examine the shed buildings and trace out in the long grass the three sidings that had once been in use. In one of the sheds was a derelict 'WHISTLE' sign with the old K. & E.S.R. blue background.

Soon Rolvenden was in commotion again; 32655 returned backing an emptier ballast train, which 31048 was to leave with at 4.30 pm for Headcorn and Ashford, 31065, also tender first, with veteran driver Jimmy Webb and Fireman Eric Thompson drew up with what had been the remains of the 12.20 pm ex-Robertsbridge, now the 3.15 pm mixed for Headcorn, a coach crowded with enthusiasts and a mere van. The run up the stiff incline to Tenterden Town was most brisk. There, as at other stations, people had come specially to see the train, which within a week would be no more. In the yard 31065 picked up two more vans, eleven wagons and a brake van, and this formation was kept right to Headcorn. Indeed



[Pamlin Prints]

so much time was gained in not having to shunt that we waited nearly five minutes at High Halden Road, and at Headcorn waited another five minutes for the 4.22 pm connection to Charing Cross.

Riding on the 01 though smooth was no joke for, although affording an excellent view ahead

and to both sides, the low tender in front let in the north wind. Driver Webb, at intervals, huddled himself up inside his coat. Furthermore, particles of coal dust flew back off the top of the tender, and the only source of comfort was the warm grate behind. This was filled only once by Fireman Thompson during the whole ten miles, a strict contrast to the Terrier which had required six helpings and had blown off steam for nearly two minutes at Bodiam.

On the steep incline out of Tenterden Town a weatherbeaten gradient post was pointed out, almost completely hidden in the bush, the 1 in 70 having long disappeared. Now a halt was made at Tenterden St. Michaels to set two people down, but nevertheless the 01 made a good start up the gradient to the short tunnel, and then running was most sprightly with much whistling as the 3.15 pm mixed traversed the many ungated level crossings. There were no more passengers but a stop was made at Biddenden to exchange the token and in the fading daylight and misty countryside 31065 arrived at Headcorn with time to spare. After alighting from the footplate and wishing my hosts and what remained of the line all the best in the future, 31065 departed to shunt and I went over to join the group of railwayfans waiting for the 4.22 pm to arrive. Five minutes later it ran in headed by 30928 Stowe, a regular, it appears, on the 4.10 pm from Ashford, and the Schools delivered its charge at Charing Cross exactly to the minute. In London it was raining heavily as if to betoken the weeping in many a heart which held the Kent and East Sussex Railway dear in its affections.

Klaus Marx

Klaus Marx is editor of Bluebell News, The Journal of the Bluebell Railway

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Letter to the Editor

Following the article on Colonel Stephens' Twilight Years, spent at the Lord Warden Hotel, Dover, (The Tenterden Terrier, Summer 1983) Henry Maxwell recalls memories of this establishment, as a schoolboy in the early 1920's

Sir – I first entered the Lord Warden when taken out by my mother from my prep school, in either 1921 or 1922. We drove over from Broadstairs, where my school was, to Dover, as I was at the time crazy about the S.E. & C.R. cross-channel steamers, and craved to have another glimpse of them. We arrived at the Lord Warden about tea-time and asked if we could have tea. I remember the entrance hall as on the sombre side, with the then inevitable plants growing out of huge pots on either side of the door. There was a rather unwelcoming Hall Porter, who seemed to have no very friendly eye for schoolboys or their mothers. However, he said that we would be given tea in the Lounge. This was a huge room on the right, as I remember it, of the entrance, approached down a sombre and lofty corridor, and itself, even for those days, rather antiquated in decoration, and Victorian. The curtains were dark and heavy. There were sombre-hued chairs with antimacassars of Nottingham Lace over their backs. There were plants or palms in pots in the window recesses, the carpet was dark-hued like the chair upholstery, and the walls were darkish too, I would say covered in creton of some kind. There were rather heavy chandeliers and wall lights, and I'm not sure whether the chandeliers were of brass, although there was an amount of crystalware around.

Two waiters were on duty, and both seemed to me elderly; there was an air of silence and muted voices, and somehow a suggestion of a world that was not contemporary and had no wish to be!

But when the tea came I was stupified! It was the most sumptuous hotel tea I had ever beheld, and I recall my mother's and my awed appreciation of the fact that the sandwiches were sardine and not just the usual cucumber or egg. Profusion of bread and butter followed, and both cut, or fruit cake in slices and small sugar cakes. There was also hot buttered toast – and of course jam with the bread and butter. It was all brought silently and with a somehow mournful note to the service, as though it was the 'baked meats' of a funeral.

I remember my mother speculating as to how much it would cost, in a light-hearted way, and

pretending much relief when it proved to be no more expensive than our beloved Pavilion Hotel at Folkstone, which was kind of home from home to us all. In subsequent times, there seemed little change except that there did seem fewer people staying or eating there, and in about 1924, we were told at the Pavilion that it would have been shut altogether but for the Hotel doing the catering for the cross-channel steamers to Calais and Boulogne. Distinctions between the Frederick and the Gordon Hotels seemed to be fading then, and at the end, the Pavilion Hotel at Folkestone did the catering for both Dover and Folkstone boats.

We never actually stayed at the Lord Warden, but I am fairly sure that, at the time I speak of, it had no running water in any of its bedrooms and one was still provided with a can of hot water wrapped round with a towel in the basin on the washstand; coal fires of course in all rooms. At the Pavilion, they cost 1/6 if lit after six p.m. and half-a-crown if before noon! The dining room was huge and a little less sombre, the walls and columns being painted white. All the servants seemed elderly – unlike at the Pavilion, and the Manager I never once saw. It was, I recall, hoped that with the closure of the Burlington, the Lord Warden would have a new lease of life, but Dover had ceased to attract visitors after the Admiralty Harbour was built, as the sea was no longer, as it were, right beyond the beach, and the type of guest who came to the hotel was more and more the storm-bound passenger for the channel, or a honeymooning couple who had left London too late to cross to France till next day.

On another occasion an Aunt of mine, who had become very much a 'Merry Widow', arrived one afternoon at the Lord Warden expecting to be met there shortly from the Duke of Westminster's yacht, Cutty Sark, which was on its way from Ostend, to Deauville. Despite being summer, there was a fearful gale blowing and the yacht was much delayed. My Aunt, noting the weather, had taken some form of sea-sick remedy, after which she was advised not to eat or drink . . . She sat therefore in the Hotel, eating nothing and drinking nothing, but looking anxiously to the door whenever anyone approached it.

Clearly, this was not at all the kind of guest the hotel appreciated, and after hovering round her with offers of tea, or later aperitifs the staff became somewhat suspicious, and the Manager clearly thought she was attempting to

pick someone up! Once or twice he came and rather pointedly asked if he could bring her anything. No, she said, she was waiting for friends. Towards nine o'clock in the evening, when no one had come for her, and still she refused all aid, he more or less told her straight out that she was not the sort of guest they required! The words were hardly out of his mouth before the Duke himself came through the door, full of apology and greeting, and my

Aunt said it was too funny for words to see the way the Manager changed his tune. He was all over them both, with smiles, solicitude, and concern for their well-being; saying to the Duke how glad they had been to offer shelter to the lady, and how he hoped their care of her had been acceptable.

Coddenham, Ipswich

Henry Maxwell



The dining room of the Lord Warden hotel, Dover, 19C. Although the guests might stay as individuals, they ate at one large table. In a hotel of the quality of the Lord Warden, evening dress for dinner was de rigueur

The South Eastern Railway had built the line to Dover and, to stop travellers embarking from other south coast ports, were prepared to offer them every comfort and inducement. As many passengers who wished to take boats for France wanted to stay overnight at Dover, the railway decided to build the Lord Warden hotel which was sumptuously opened with a grand public dinner on September 7th 1853. It was a Doric building named after the greatest and about oldest, living hero, the Duke of Wellington, who was Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and who took a keen interest in the original design of the one-hundred-and-eleven bedroom hotel.

Although the Lord Warden was erected and furnished by the SER the directors, unlike the directors of the GWR at Paddington, sought a tenant from the beginning rather than go into the hotel business. The hotel might have a "spacious salle à manger and a noble coffee room" but they decided it was a far cry from operating engines and carriages. Certainly a contemporary illustration of the dining room at the Lord

Warden would have been enough to overawe all but the very sophisticated. It was a large room dominated by the one enormous horseshoe table, and amid the acres of snowy white tablecloth sat large fruit bowls on pedestals, each topped with an uncut pineapple. The table was so wide that it would have been quite impossible for a guest to speak comfortably to his neighbour on the other side even if etiquette had allowed. For those with a taste for display and formality, it was a rather splendid sight, but for the shy and retiring it was a sufficient explanation for the number of guests who chose to take all their meals in their own rooms. Authoress Lucas Malet wrote "Persons who in the security of their island home are well bred and really quite delightful, become as awkward as chased hens in an hotel." For the railways, however, there was soon to be precedent for both tenants and self-management to be the wrong decision.

(Reproduced from 'The Golden Age of British Hotels')

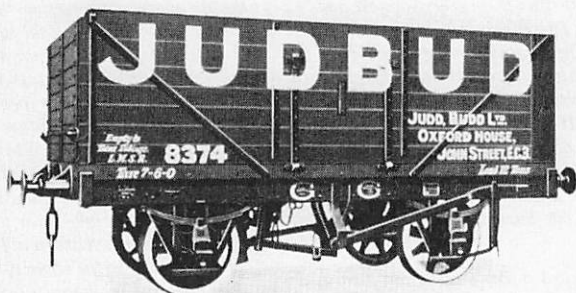
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Number 6

One of the strangest items of rolling stock in the Kent & East Sussex fleet was the four-wheeled steam railcar purchased from R.Y. Pickering & Company in March 1905 for £350. The Railway had problems with it right from the start when they first gave it the number 16 in the carriage list and then changed their minds and numbered it 6 in the locomotive list.

The railcar, initially described as a "steam motor carriage" and later as a "steam rail motor", was the smallest of the many steam railcars built in Britain at this time and seems to have been Pickering's only venture in this field. It was 27'1" long over body according to the Railway's Rolling Stock Register although other sources claim 26'3". At one end was a guard's compartment from which the guard could regulate the steam, operate the whistle and communicate with the driver by gong. This compartment, which appears to have been at most 9 foot wide by four foot deep, was also claimed to have room for six seated passengers, four standing passengers and up to fourteen churns! Even if one accepts that the churns were an alternative to the passengers rather

than additional to them the prospect of a journey in such conditions can hardly have encouraged custom!

The guard's compartment was separated from the main passenger saloon by the transverse gangway without external gates or doors. The saloon was 15 feet long and divided into two parts. The part nearest the gangway seated 20 non-smokers and the forward section seated 11 smokers; all seats were third class. Beyond the saloon was the driving compartment which housed a vertical boiler and engine supplied by Hutchinson & Company in 1904. Two 5½" x 9" vertical cylinders drove a layshaft connected to the geared front axle by a roller chain. Half a ton of coal could be carried in the engine compartment and water was supplied from a 150 gallon cylindrical tank slung transversely beneath the saloon. The guard's end presented a neat appearance but the driver's end, seen head-on, bore a striking resemblance to a potting shed!

Whatever possessed Stephens to purchase the railcar remains a mystery; the Directors'



The Rolvenden water tower in the early days of the preservation movement before 'boxing in'. The tank is resting on girders salvaged from No. 6
[S.R. Garrett collection]

Minutes of the period do not even record its arrival although Stephens or Pickerings were proud enough of the railcar to provide information for an article in *Locomotive* magazine in May 1905. Perhaps Stephens was impressed by the one supplied by the South Eastern & Chatham for the Sheppey Light Railway which he had engineered. Another possibility is that Pickerings had built it as a speculative venture, possibly for the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway who were contemplating purchase of such a vehicle at this time, and persuaded Stephens to take it off their hands at a bargain price. Whatever the reasons, subsequent events proved the railcar to have been a poor investment.

There are neither documentary nor photographic records of No. 6's service on the Kent & East Sussex but the following entries in the Rolling Stock Register tell their own story:

*New crank shaft made by Clarkes Crank & Forge Coy
Lincoln 1906*

*Engine thoroughly overhauled & repaired by S.E. &
C.Rly.Coy at their marine works Dover 5/06*

*New Boiler purchased from messrs White Bros,
Stratford and put in 7/07*

*New crank shaft made by Clarkes Crank & Forge Coy
Lincoln and put in 8/08*

*New connecting rods made by J. Wright Tipton and
put in Feb 1909*

New set steel tubes put in boiler Aug 1909

*New brass eccentric plummer block cap put on Aug
1909*

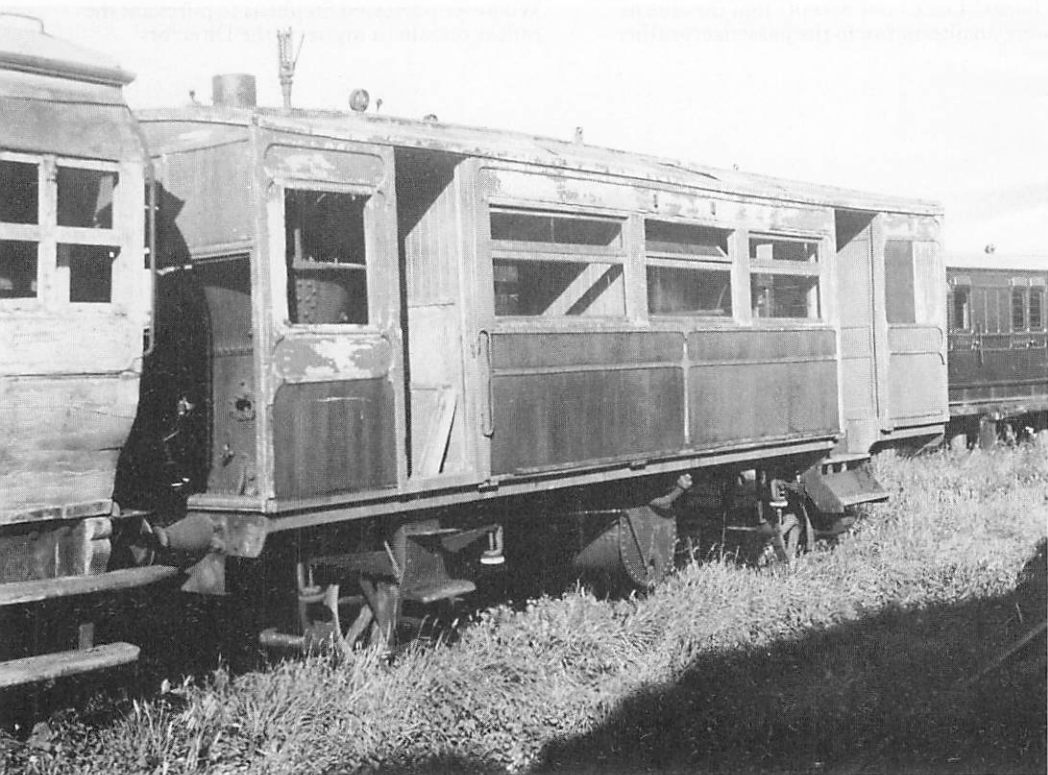
Engine & Boiler overhauled March 1910

Engine & Boiler overhauled, tubes, new set May 1911

*Engine and boiler overhauled and fractured staunchions
repaired June 1913*

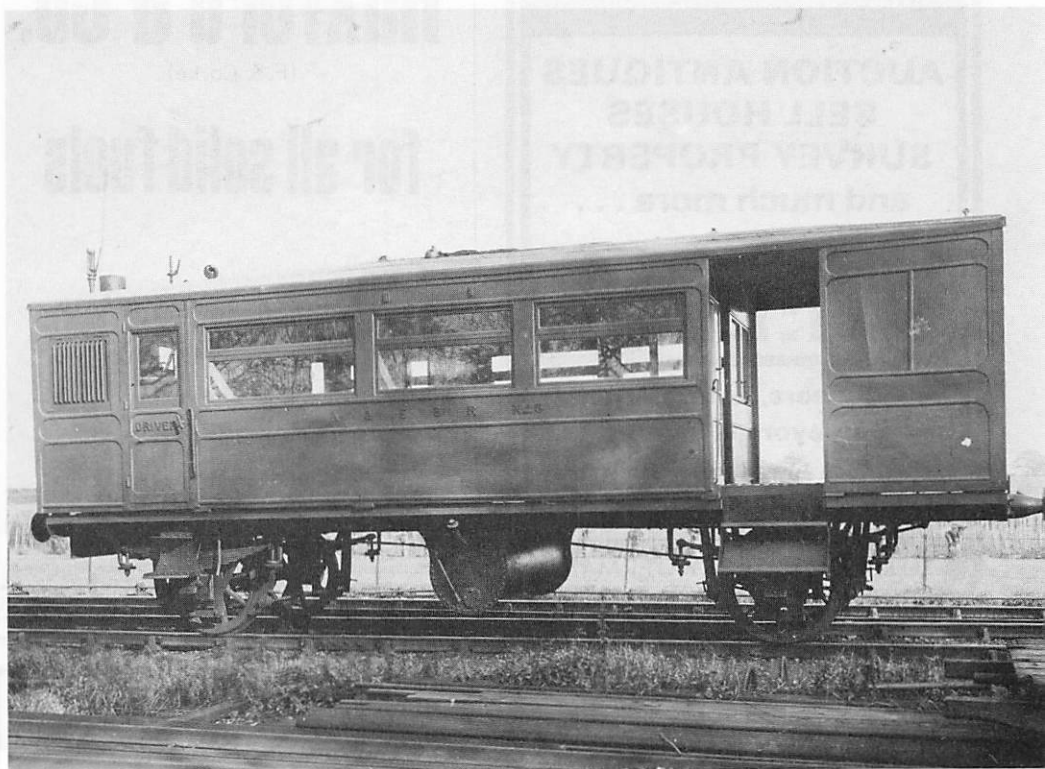
Body left side overhauled and renewed June 1913

The railcar seems to have spent as much time under repair as in service. It can hardly have



Partly dismantled at Rolvenden, late 1930's

[National Railway Museum]



At Rolvenden, C 1920. Note cut out lettering on the waistline

[W.H. Austen collection]

been a comfortable vehicle to travel in with the vibration and heat from the engine compartment being compounded by springs which might have been acceptable on a carriage or van of the period but can have been nothing but unbearable in a rigid four-wheeler. The repairs of June 1913 point suspiciously towards some sort of major derailment though there is no record of such an accident. The thought of the railcar lurching and bucking up the Tenterden Bank defies contemplation.

There is no record of it working after 1913. Indeed, given the ample stock of locomotives and carriages on the line by then, one can see little reason why it should have been used. It might have suited some of the lighter loaded services but can hardly have been suitable for towing vans or waggons on the mixed services. Why light up the railcar for occasional trips when a locomotive would need to be put in steam for mixed workings anyway? It is significant that Stephens obtained permission

to build a platform for the new siding at Bodiam in 1910 so that the railcar could pass passenger trains there but never proceeded with the scheme.

It was not Kent & East Sussex policy to scrap rolling stock, however unlikely any future use might be. As a result No. 6 spent the inter-war years decaying in the yard at Rolvenden. Even when Austen succeeded Stephens and began to dispose of stock it survived unscathed. The petrol railcars came and went. Bogie carriages replaced the old four and six-wheelers. No. 6 outlasted nearly all of them and would probably have remained until the arrival of British Railways had it not been for the erection of a new water tower at Rolvenden in 1944. Short of structural materials, the Kent & East Sussex finally cannibalised No. 6 to provide the girders on which the water tank rests to this day. Somebody must have known that it would come in useful some day!

Stephen Garrett

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The East Kent Light Railway in 1983

Written and photographed by Norman Johnson

*Colonel Stephens' East Kent Railway still operates! Many people do not realise that when the East Kent Railway (EKR) finally closed on 1 March 1951, the 2 miles from Shepherdswell to Tilmanstone Colliery was retained for coal traffic and is regularly so used to this day. This is most appropriate as the *raison d'être* of the EKR was to provide transport for the industrial area which East Kent was to have become following the discovery of coal deposits there towards the end of the last century, a prophecy which fortunately, from an environmental point of view, failed to materialise.*

By kind consent of the Dover Area Manager, through Mr B Elkins, Train Crew Manager, I was permitted to travel in the cab over the East Kent section to see present day working at first hand. What a very smooth and efficient operation it proved to be; quite a contrast to the old East Kent. Colonel Stephens would not have believed it!

During July 1983 I met Ramsgate Traction Inspector, Ernie Harris, by arrangement at Shepherdswell station, SR, at 0830 hours, was

escorted "down the yard" and introduced to the train crew:- Driver Alan Hall and his assistant Terry Lawrence, both of Faversham, and Guard Steve Mackie of Dover Priory. Due to recent bridge strengthening at Tilmanstone, main line 75 ton, class 73 electro-diesel locomotives could now be used on the EKR and into the colliery rather than the class 08 used previously, and, sure enough, our loco. was Stewarts Lane's no 73108. Upon being invited aboard I was surprised to learn that the loco. and crew had already undertaken one EKR trip that morning. So much for my early start!

The procedure each weekday morning was to haul 10 empty vacuum fitted MDV 21 ton, four-wheeled wagons per trip to the colliery, and return fully loaded with coal destined for Kingsnorth Power Station, in the Grain Peninsular. This was normally done three times daily, thereby forming one train per day from Shepherdswell to Strood (whence the coal went by road to Kingsnorth) which consisted



Train approaching the main line, but still on East Kent metals; taken from the platform of Shepherdswell station.



Loading coal on to trucks at Tilmanstone Colliery. Note the small tower above the notice, referred to in the text

of 30 loaded wagons. However, on the occasion of my visit, stocks of coal at the Power Station were high and two daily trips only were being run, comprising 20 wagon loads.

During the journey, somewhat surprisingly, I found that most pre-cast concrete $\frac{1}{4}$ mile posts and gradient posts were still in situ.

At 0833 hrs, duly installed in "No. 2 end" Alan Hall checked that he was in possession of the single line train staff. This consisted of a piece of dowelling approx 10" long around which was wrapped a piece of metal impressed "Shepherdswell. Tilmanstone": This was illustrated the utter simplicity of one of railways' most basic safety devices. Thus assured, the loco. and train was eased round the sharp curve, flanges protesting, which led to "The East Kent". The EKR platforms were easily discernable on our right although heavily overgrown, ironically with double track still in place. An overgrown and disused run round loop was on our left as we commenced the ascent at 1 in 70 to cross the Shepherdswell to Eythorne Road. No gates or AHB's on this railway – just a "stop" board for the trains and

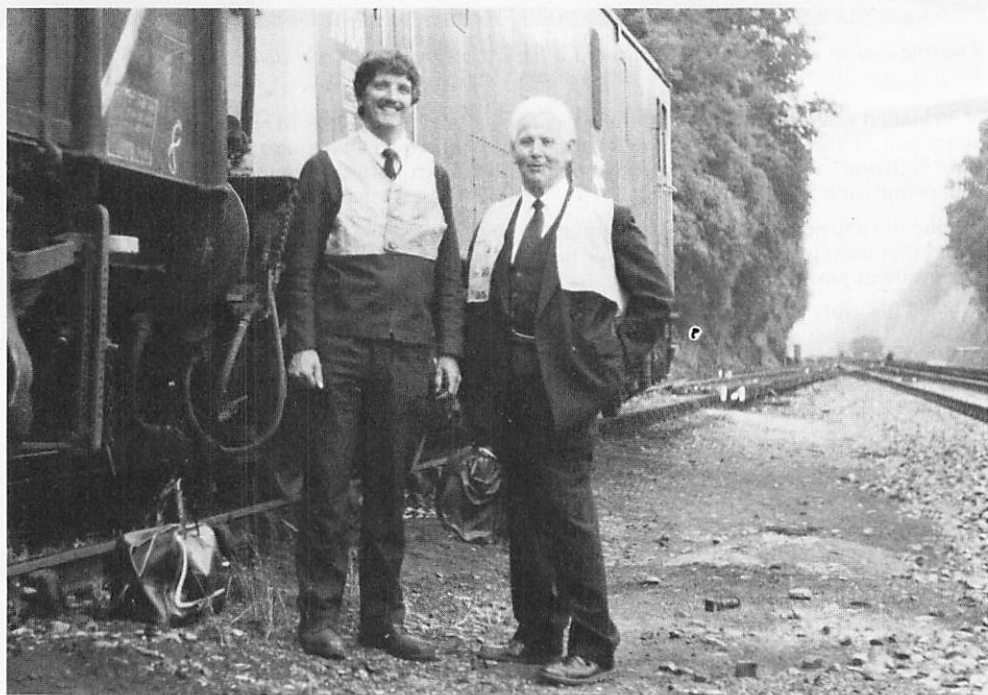
"give way" signs to road traffic. Driver Hall expressed an opinion that the latter were quite inadequate and should be mandatory "Stop" signs. At that moment, a car sped across in front of the train so underlining the wisdom of this.

Pausing a moment to ensure that the road was then indeed clear, the loco's two-tone horn blaring, we pulled ahead onto level track and entered a chalk cutting prior to descending at 1 in 100 through the $\frac{1}{4}$ mile Golgotha Tunnel. Built in 1912 with an unusually shallow arch Golgotha Tunnel was designed for double line but, as with many country railways, the second track was not to materialise. Indeed, the eastern side of the tunnel was stacked with blocks of chalk said to have been removed from elsewhere in the tunnel at the time of construction. The arch itself was constructed of brick resting on walls of hard chalk left on each side. This was of similar construction to the $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile Polhill Tunnel on the Charing Cross – Dover/Hastings line.

We coasted through the tunnel and caught a glimpse of mile-post 72 $\frac{1}{4}$ about halfway



Rail entry to Tilmanstone Colliery



Driver Alan Hall (left) and Traction Inspector Ernie Harris



Loaded train leaving the colliery and crossing a specially strengthened bridge over the Eythorne to Tilmanstone road

through, the gradient falling sharply at 1 in 75 as we reached daylight again, and on down towards the second and final level crossing. This was situated at the site of Eythorne station, just beyond M.P. 73½ where the short lived branch to the defunct Guilford Colliery made a trailing connection. Again we stopped, then crossed the road cautiously, Inspector Harris assisting the driver to keep a sharp eye for road traffic.

Once over the crossing, we curved right, taking what was once grandly known as the Tilmanstone Colliery Loop. The overgrown remains of the EKR "Mainline" which went on to a junction at Eastry for Canterbury Road and Richborough was clearly discernable on the left. Once again we climbed steeply, crossed over the Eythorne/Tilmanstone Road by the strengthened overbridge previously mentioned, and entered Tilmanstone Colliery, just 20 minutes from the start of the journey.

Once on National Coal Board property, a well-oiled routine went into action. The wagons were uncoupled from the loco. by the guard and then set back to stop with the loco. by a

board bearing the legend "British Rail Locomotives Must Not Pass This point". The wagons were thus correctly placed for loading. Whilst the train was positioned, an NCB man was noticed standing on a small tower carefully examining the interior of each wagon. Inspector Harris informed me that this was to ensure that each wagon floor was intact (I understood that the load has been known to drop through!) and that no foreign bodies such as soft drink cans were present. Loading was then commenced by two huge bucket-fitted vehicles operated by NCB staff and was completed in about 15 minutes.

After a short while, the loco. eased the train forward over a modern electronic weigh-bridge which accurately assessed the weight of each wagon by axle load, thus the entire gross weight of the complete train was quickly known. Details were entered onto a slip which was collected by the guard. Although the maximum line speed is 25 mph, Driver Hall drove well below that speed, perhaps wisely as handling 400 tons of train could be tricky down the steeply graded sections, particularly on a wet rail. Running on



Golgotha tunnel, Shepherdswell end. The gradient post on the left marks the transition from a short stretch of level track to a fall through the tunnel of 1 in 100

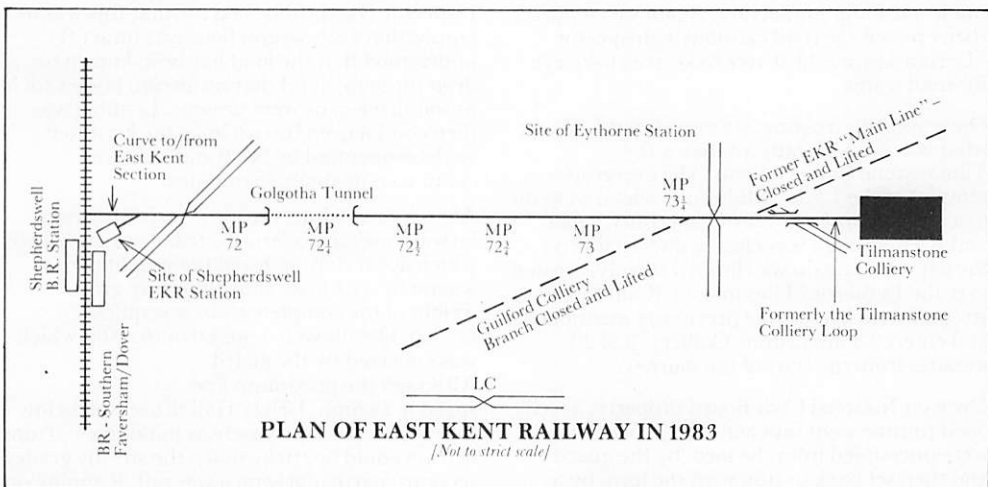
diesel (we were now in "No. 1 end") I was surprised that the 600 H.P. produced lifted the train so apparently effortlessly up the 1 in 75 to Golgotha Tunnel and over the 1 in 100 inside. All too soon we emerged into daylight, descended at 1 in 70 to Shepherdswell and once again ground painfully round the curve to terminate in the down siding adjacent to the main line of the erstwhile London, Chatham and Dover railway from London via Faversham to Dover.

Here, 17 minutes from the Colliery we set back to "Hook up" to the 10 loaded MDV's berthed following the earlier trip. Thus complete, we shunted to the up siding by a series of moves

where the train was to wait until evening when it was taken forward to Strood "on the juice".

Before I took my leave, Driver Alan Hall and Inspector Ernie Harris went to a great deal of trouble explaining the workings of the class 73 ED locomotive, leaving the impression that BR must have one of the most flexible and versatile machines ever built to run on rails.

Finally, I would like to thank all concerned for arranging such an interesting trip, especially Inspector Ernie Harris and Driver Alan Hall, not forgetting Driver's Assistant Terry Lawrence who kindly gave up his seat to me.



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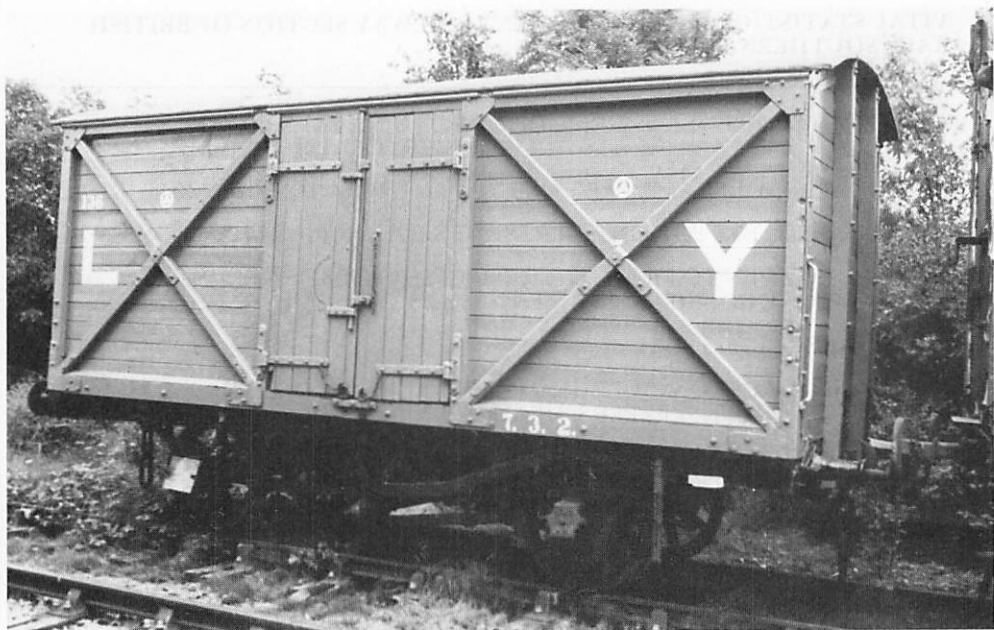
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Lancashire & Yorkshire van at Northiam, August 1983

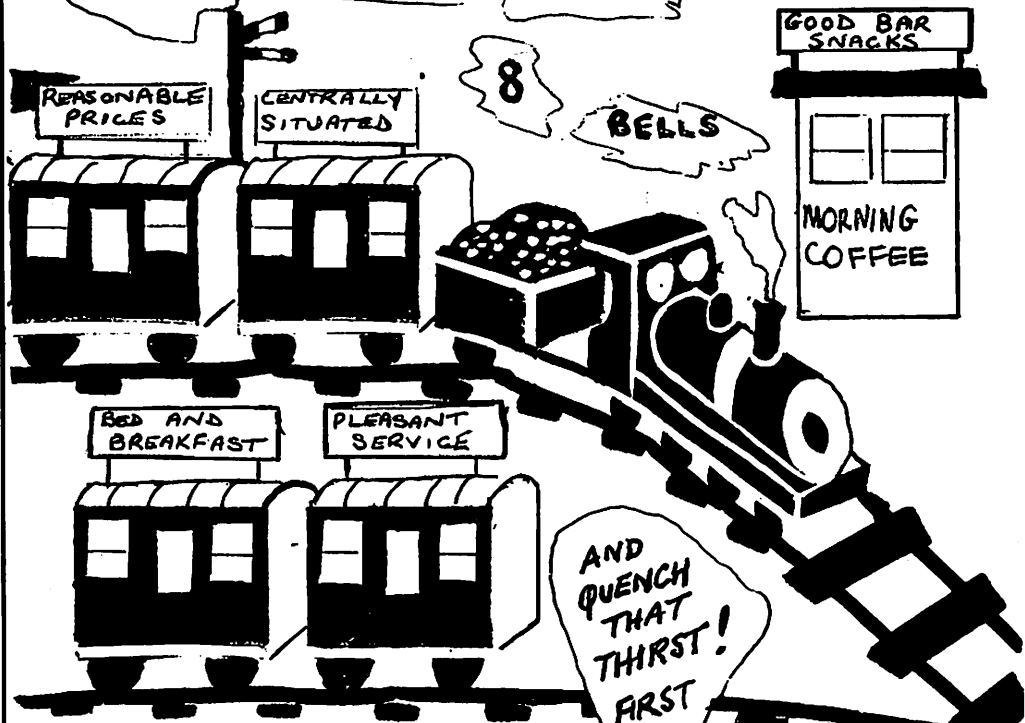
[Paul Sutton]



Southern Railway brakevan at Rolvenden, July 1983

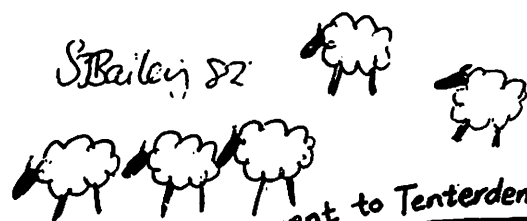
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